States of the region in the previous 5 years, the two factors to be given equal weightage.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Promotion of Ex-Servicemen in DGOF, Calcutta

1378. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ex-servicemen employed in Ordnance factories are not given fair deal in the matter of promotion to higher posts, from the post of Chargemen onwards;

(b) if so, the details of representations/appeals received by the DGOF, Calcutta during the last six months from the employees belonging to Ex-servicemen category, in connection with their promotions from the post of Chargemen etc. to higher post;

(c) whether some of the factory managements under DGOF are blocking their promotion on one pretext or the other;

(d) whether Government instructions in respect to ex-servicemen are not being implemented; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) No, Sir. Promotions to higher grade in Chargeman Grade. I, Assistant Foreman, Senior PA, Hindi Officer and Junior Works Manager are made as per seniority and suitability subject to reservation for SC and ST.

(b) No such representations/appeals have been received by DGOF.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Pak Spy ring at Interim Test Range

1379. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Pak spy ring, smuggling out information on country's missile programme from the Chandipur-on-sea Interim Test Range, has recently been unearthed;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether any official has been found involved in the racket; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, stating their *modus operandi* and the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, a foreign national has been arrested by West Bengal Police on the charges of spying on Proof & Experimental Establishment (PXE), Chandipur, the test range for gun and ammunition systems. Based on investigation the police has arrested 11 more persons including two lower grade, employees of PXE, Chandipur. Investigation by senior officials of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) have confirmed that no classified information was lost due to the organisational procedure of transmission of information on need; to know basis.

(c) No Defence scientist-fengineer has been found involved in the racket.

(d) Does not arise.

Shifting of firing range in Hyderabad

1380. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the civilian population on the outskirts of Hyderabad is on constant threat on account of continuous firing practice of the army; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to shift and construct new firing range farther away from the city, to provide necessary safety to the civilians?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Except for land measuring 225 acres which was acquired in 1996 by the CRPF and around which habitation has come up adjoining the small arms range which has been in existence since 1964, there are no other developments in the area. During the last 3 years no case of injury or death has been